

FCC PUBLIC NOTICE

DA 09-2431

Released: November 17, 2009

COMMENT SOUGHT ON MOVING TOWARD A DIGITAL DEMOCRACY

GN Docket Nos. 09-47, 09-51 and 09-137
Comments - NBP Notice #20.

Comments Date: December 10, 2009

The following comments address both:

Item # 2. Processes Leading up to Election Day

Item # 4. Online Government Hearings and Online Town Hall Meetings.

STRATEGY

Detroit Public Television (DPTV) has a long history and commitment of using technology to connect leaders, visionaries and citizens to address the current issues affecting the quality of life in Southeast Michigan.

Most recently digital conversion is allowing DPTV to use multiple media platforms (e.g. 3-channels of digital TV and broadband Internet) to foster “authentic engagement” – not just the routine process of meetings. Authentic civic engagement is boosted exponentially when citizens are empowered with tools that allow them to participate in the political process on their own terms and timetables not government body or broadcast schedules.

Our use of broadband technology is helping citizens really understand and address their communities’ needs and challenges by creating an open online environment where pertinent information can be delivered and they can engage in detailed discussions about issues of importance.

Broadband allows Detroit Public TV to inform citizens and provides them with the opportunity to voice their opinion in an unbiased environment.

Integrating broadband into its broadcast delivery options is helping DPTV become an outlet for current and potential new leaders in the community to communicate their vision and positions on issues to a wide audience that might not otherwise have the opportunity to hear it.

Our leadership in using technology to establish a digital democracy has opened the discussion about the future of SE Michigan to the entire community beyond the typical civic leaders, board members, and activists.

The result of our leadership initiative will be better connected leaders and more informed viewers and citizens.

ASSETS

Hi-Definition Channel 56.1

Digital Channels 56.2 and 56.3

Hi-Definition Studios

- Wixom, Riley Broadcast Center
- Detroit, Satellite Studio
- Michigan, Mobile Production Truck

Websites

- dptv.org
- MiVote.org
- MiEarth.org
- Detroitperforms.org
- wrcjfm.org



A. Town Hall Meetings

Town Hall meetings are produced at DPTV studios or on location. These discussions of salient topics may include a live audience or phoned-in TV audience participation. The meetings are usually moderated by one person, and the panel consists of 3-5 experts that represent various perspectives of the topic. Recent events have been broadcast live on 56.1, 56.2 or be recorded for air at a later date. **More to the purpose of this comment, these Town Hall meetings and related discussions are delivered in whole or in part (vignettes) by broadband on the Internet at www.MiVote.org.**

B. Vignettes

DPTV broadcasts vignettes on-air element during the breaks between normal programming. Vignettes are 1½ to 2 minutes in length and air during news and primetime programming. As noted above, collections of these videos are delivered by Broadband at MiVote.org. Sometimes they become stand-alone mini-programs that direct viewers to a site to see the entire show on 56.1 or 56.2.

Detroit Public TV delivers important Election (e.g. candidates, issues, propositions, etc.) by digital broadcast TV and its Broadband “channels” to inform and thereby have genuine impact:

- Building the capacity of our community – the leaders, the networks, and the safe spaces, the relationships – to solve issues.
- Building the relationships to accelerate the work.
- Helping the public understand the issues through clear and accessible content.
- Creating a unique dialogue to connect leadership to the involved citizens of Detroit.
- Establishing partnerships with other local media outlets.
- Continuing to offer free, unrestricted access to our leadership content through sustainable websites.
- Connecting viewers to the leadership content through an opt-in MiVote.org E-newsletter

Detroit Public Television is the media leader at using technology to move this region toward digital democracy and extending the impact of organizations working to secure the future of SE Michigan.

Our goal is to turn outward toward the community to better understand its needs:

- People’s aspirations
- Rhythms of the community – where we are today so we can see what it takes to get to where we want to be
- Delivering issues to people in language they understand

Recent Examples

The Great Debates

- Detroit Public TV was the first media to offer all Southeast Michigan candidates for the state legislature free access to reach the voters (2008)
 - Detroit Public TV produced 12 debates and 3 forums among candidates
 - Videos of the debates and forums premiered on Digital Channel 56.3 and were broadcast in a marathon format on Analog Channel 56 and duplicated on Digital Channel 56.2
 - **All videos were posted to MiVote.org**
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- **MiVote – 2008 Presidential Election**
 - MiVote.org was the outlet for high school and college students from all over Southeast Michigan to post their videos talking about their issues and endorsing their favorite candidate
 - More than 400 students posted to be heard
 - DPTV broadcast a wide sampling of these as vignettes on Channel 56



The project concluded with a live Town Hall meeting hosted by Devin Scillian. The panel consisted of students and professors from the University of Michigan-Dearborn. **Videos from MiVote.org were featured throughout the Town Hall as discussion starters.**

- **MiVote – 2009 Detroit Election**

- Detroit Public TV offered all 180 candidates for the Detroit City Council and Charter Commission primary election the opportunity to be interviewed about their candidacy
- Interviews aired extensively on Channel 56.2
- **Interviews were posted to MiVote.org**

The content from this initiative has become part of classroom curriculum

- Vignettes, candidate and issue profiles, and opinions of high school and college students can be part of curriculum for civics class assignments and discussions
- Interactive nature allows for students to be heard
- Flexible lengths encourage use in classes and social media
- Content is collected on the MiVote.org website
- The best of the submitted material is chosen for broadcast on DPTV Channels 56.1 and 56.2.

Building on the immense success of the Detroit candidate interviews, DPTV will enhance its coverage of the city council and charter commission race:

Interviews: DPTV and its partners conducted 10-minute interviews with each of the 18 city council and 18 charter commission candidates. Questions were specific to what they would do if elected. **Interviews were posted on MiVote.org and aired on DPTV Plus 56.2.**

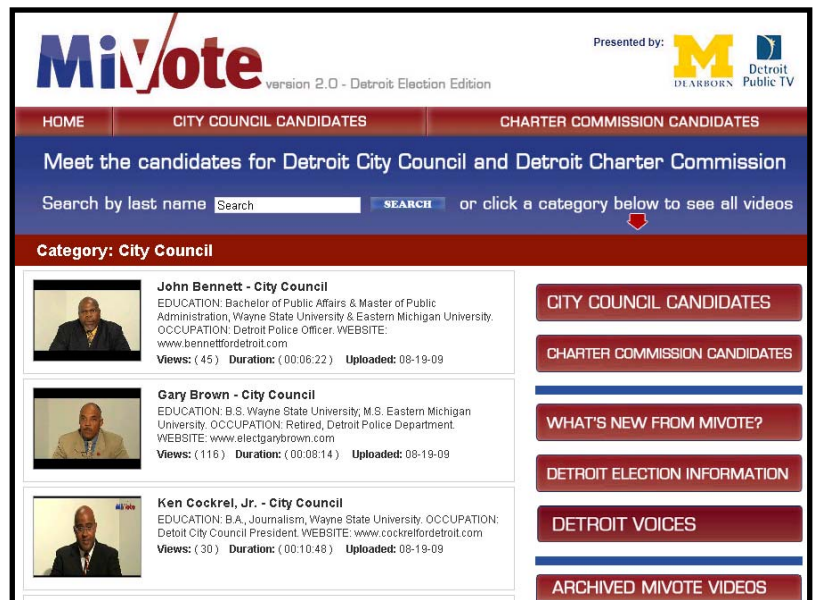
Debates: DPTV hosted six city council debates/forums. Each included three candidates (selected at random). Local editorial directors Nolan Finley and Stephen Henderson moderated. **Debates/forums were posted on MiVote.org and aired on DPTV 56.1 and DPTV Plus 56.2.**

Voters Sound Off: MiVote.org encourages voters to sound-off on issues and endorse candidates by uploading their own videos.

More Content: DPTV can take MiVote to a new level of interactivity and voter education by putting FLIP cameras in the hands of candidates to let them share their stories and vision.

www.MiVOTE.ORG – THE WEBSITE

- MiVote.org stands as the center of our “leadership” programming, uniting television and online content.
 - Television can attract a mass audience and introduce people to life-stage concepts and information. Online media – and especially social media – reach people where they are with the information and inspiration they need to make decisions and take positive actions.
 - More than 500 videos have appeared on MiVote.org.
- MiVote.org features:
 - User-generated content and social media
 - Local and national on-air programming
 - Collected content from partners and other media



Now DPTV is developing MiVote Tonight, a new public affairs show featuring high-profile Detroit news personalities. It will drive the MiVote message by tackling the Detroit races – and issues important to the 2010 elections. The three-segment show can include:

- Headlines: Creative look at the big news of the week
- Up Front: In-studio interview with key newsmakers
- Sound Off: Clips from MiVote videos/citizen interviews
- Commentary: Thoughts from opinion leaders